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SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR JUNE 23-25 WASHINGTON VISIT BY SPAIN'S INTERIOR MINISTER

REF: A. MADRID 351

[B](#). SECSTATE 56239

[C](#). MADRID 440

[D](#). MADRID 261

[E](#). MADRID 484

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Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Arnold A. Chacon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C//NF) SUMMARY: Spanish Interior Minister Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba will meet senior officials from the DHS, DOJ, FBI, CIA, ODNI, NCTC, and possibly the NSC, during his June 23-25 visit to Washington, DC. USG interlocutors will find that Rubalcaba - who has wide-ranging responsibilities on security, law enforcement and intelligence issues - is very capable and serious but also charming. A career politician, Rubalcaba is arguably the most impressive member of Spanish President Zapatero's cabinet and a very useful and powerful ally to have in the Zapatero Administration. His influence exceeds the formal parameters of his Ministry. Embassy Madrid judges the bilateral law enforcement relationship to be excellent, while the bilateral CT relationship is good but could be better. Rubalcaba is interested in signing either several bilateral accords or (if the accords cannot be ironed out in time) political declarations of intent to do so in the near future. The Minister has an extensive agenda - including counter-terrorism (CT), law enforcement, and intelligence issues - he wishes to discuss with US officials. While the focus of this trip will be on discussing bilateral issues, Rubalcaba also will address GOS interest in increased collaboration on justice and home affairs issues during Spain's upcoming stint as President of the European Union (EU) during the first half of 2010. END SUMMARY.

//US-SPAIN RELATIONS//

[1](#)2. (C//NF) U.S.-Spain relations are strong and based on shared global interests. Spain is an important friend and ally and we value its cooperation against terrorism and a range of other security issues. Since the US presidential election in November, a strong atmosphere of goodwill has emerged in Spain for closer bilateral cooperation. As a gesture of this goodwill, the GOS presently is considering accepting some of the detainees currently held at Guantanamo (GTMO, see Ref A). XXXXXXXXXXXX. Spain also allows us the use of two military bases that are critical transit points between the U.S. and Iraq, however, are the efforts by the Spanish judiciary - invoking "universal jurisdiction" - to indict former USG officials for their allegedly involvement in torture at GTMO. (See Ref C).

//RUBALCABA AND HIS MINISTRY//

[1](#)3. (C//NF) A member of parliament since 1996, Rubalcaba is a three-time Minister who in mid-2008 also served a brief stint as acting Defense Minister. He is known for his intelligence, discretion, hard work, and mastery of detail, as well as his negotiating prowess. Rubalcaba was the Socialist party's longtime pointman on CT issues before Zapatero named him Interior Minister in early 2006. He is one of two or three individuals whom Zapatero often consults before making big decisions, and not only on issues within Rubalcaba's portfolio. A senior official within the

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Socialist party with a reputation for getting things done, Rubalcaba excels at putting out fires and is a valued contact of the Embassy, which finds him accessible and effective in getting things done for us despite his busy portfolio. This will be Rubalcaba's first meeting with most of his USG interlocutors, although he first met DHS Secretary Napolitano in Berlin for the G6 1 meeting on March 15. The Minister speaks English but prefers to have an interpreter present for some of the more technical aspects of his official meetings.

[1](#)4. (C//NF) The Ministry of Interior (MOI) oversees the Spanish National Police (SNP) and the paramilitary Civil Guard (GC). The MOI is a key cabinet post, as Spain confronts both the domestic terrorist group Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) and radical Islamist terrorists and sympathizers. Spain's 40-year battle against ETA has given its security forces - and their intelligence wings - considerable CT expertise, although the GOS continues to adapt its methods to combating decentralized radical Islamists. Spain also faces a confluence of organized crime syndicates involved in the contraband of narcotics and other drugs, human trafficking and illegal immigration, money laundering and credit card fraud, and document falsification. Meanwhile, the SNP and GC increasingly are expanding their representation overseas as attaches in Embassies. Embassy Madrid recommends that USG interlocutors press Rubalcaba on sending GC and/or SNP personnel to help train security forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

15. (C//NF) We believe Rubalcaba fully understands the extent of the lack of inter-agency cooperation between the SNP and the GC, as well as stovepipe problems between them and Spain's National Intelligence Center (CNI). He has overhauled the MOI to achieve greater inter-agency efficiencies. In 2006 he created an Organized Crime Intelligence Center (CICO) and in 2007 he created a National Center of Critical Infrastructure Protection (CNPIC). The director of Spain's National Center for Counter-Terrorism Coordination (CNCA, roughly equivalent to the NCTC) reports to Rubalcaba. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Rubalcaba has overseen a very forward-leaning CT strategy against both radical Islamists and - following the late 2006 car-bombing of the Madrid airport, which ended its unilaterally declared cease-fire - ETA. The GOS prides itself that its preventative justice approach, disrupting terrorist cells before they become operational, has resulted in no deaths at the hands of radical Islamists since 2004. Rubalcaba realizes he needs the USG on CT issues and therefore he has been cooperative with U.S. interlocutors on that topic.

//FOUR PROSPECTIVE BILATERAL ACCORDS//

16. (C//NF) Rubalcaba's staff tells us he hopes to sign up to four accords during his visit:

I) A US-proposed agreement on Preventing and Combating Serious Crime (PCSC), as discussed in Ref E.

II) An agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology for Homeland Security Matters, using the existing US-Mexico agreement as a template.

III) An MOU formalizing ongoing cooperation on the DHS's Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) at Madrid's Barajas Airport, where a successful pilot program recently was carried out.

IV) An MOU to strengthen bilateral cooperation and reinforce efforts to locate fugitives.

//PROSPECTIVE ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION PER MEETING//

17. (C//NF) Rubalcaba hopes to sign the above accords with the DHS Secretary, with whom he also will discuss protecting critical infrastructure and combating counterfeit money. He will discuss ETA, border control issues, and the CSI. He also will suggest the creation of an alert system regarding the theft of nuclear materials by terrorists. Finally, he

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will propose an exchange of liaison personnel to have officials present in each others' headquarters. On a multilateral issues, Rubalcaba will address GOS plans to "revitalize" the US-EU transatlantic partnership during Spain's EU Presidency. This may include an embryonic idea for a joint US-EU declaration on the fight against terrorism to be signed in Madrid on March 11, 2010, the sixth anniversary of the Madrid train bombings.

18. (C//NF) With the Attorney General and FBI Director, Rubalcaba will discuss the prospective accord on fugitives (See above). He also wants to discuss the CODIS database, cybercrime issues, cooperation regarding ETA, a proposal to intensify cooperation with the DEA, and efforts to fight organized crime and money laundering. He also will raise the GTMO detainee issue. Rubalcaba will have a role in deciding the GOS decision on the GTMO, based on security concerns and freedom of movement issues. Post recommends that Rubalcaba would be a logical person with whom to press the message that the various universal jurisdiction cases against former USG officials are not helpful.

19. (C//NF) Embassy Madrid is sending via other channels the proposed agenda for Rubalcaba's meetings with the DNI, CIA and NCTC.

110. (C//NF) The GOS has asked for an appointment with the U.S. National Security Adviser, with whom Rubalcaba would like to discuss the US-EU transatlantic agenda, a declaration of CT principles (See Para 9), and the issue of Guantanamo detainees. The Minister also would like to address radical Islamic terrorism in the Af/Pak region and in the Sahel.

111. (C) We suggest Washington interlocutors thank Rubalcaba for the excellent anti-organized crime and counter-narcotics relationships we enjoy in Spain and urge that we work jointly to find ways to improve the already good CT relationship. DOJ in particular will wish to thank him for Spain's assistance in extraditing arms trafficker Monzer al-Kassar in 12008.

CHACON